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ABSTRACT

When developing learning centers for the bilingual bicultural handicapped child, the teacher should consider the child's cultural values before selecting the type of center (content or topic), specifying the objectives, developing activities, providing task cards, arranging the schedule, and keeping records. (CL)

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Learning Centers for the Bilingual Bicultural Handicapped Child

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Bilingual Bicultural
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In order for the special education teacher to more effectively meet the needs of bilingual bicultural handicapped children, the teacher must recognize and consider the child's cultural values. These values must not only be recognized but also utilized in some fashion by the staff working with the bilingual bicultural handicapped child.

According to Diaz-Guerrero (1972), these values are identified as the sociocultural premises. These values labeled "traditional" are characteristics of communities which are rural, are located close to Mexican border, and are mostly occupied by Mexican-Americans (Ramirez & Castaneda, 1974). These values form a common bond which unite these people together. Ramirez and Castaneda (1972) described four major value clusters.

The first value cluster deals with identification with family, community and ethnic group. The child is encouraged to identify and keep close ties with

his family throughout life. This value contradicts the school culture which places emphasis on a sense of separate identity.

Interpersonal relationships is characterized by achievements through a cooperative effort and mutual dependence. In contrast, the culture of the schools is individual achievement. In a study conducted by Nelson and Kagan (1972) they state:

> Results indicated that with age, an Anglo-American child, significantly more so than a Mexican child, is willing to reduce his own reward in order to reduce the reward of a peer (p. 91).

The third value is status and role definition in family and community. Children have definite roles in the family and in the community. Children are taught at an early age to respect and obey their elders. The child does not question his parents. His father is the provider and leader of the family, while the mother provides both and spiritual and emotional support and guides the children.

The third value is Mexican Catholic ideology. The religion provides support and reinforcement to the other values.

In summary, Ramirez and Castaneda state:

> ...socialization in traditional Mexican American culture results in individuals who are strongly identified with their families and ethnic group, sensitive to the feelings of others, oriented towards cooperative achievement, respectful of adults and social convention, and who expect to recieve close guidance from adults (p. 48).

Now that we have briefly looked at the values of the bilingual bicultural child, let us go through the steps in developing learning centers.

1. Select the type of center. There are basically two types of centers. The first is a content center which is a curriculum area such as math, science, art, etc. The second type of center is a topic center. Examples are exploratory, puppetry, and motor. In selecting and in developing centers, the teacher should find out what the children's needs are, what their abilities are, and what their interests are. A needs assessment can be conducted by using some type of a development or screening instrument or infomral techniques.

2. Specify the objectives. If it is a content center such as math, make a list of the objectives in sequence such as: to match sets using one to one correspondence; to show the set which has more; to tell how many members are in a set, 0-10; and so on. The list of objectives can be obtained from basic curriuclum texts.

If on the other hand, the center is a topic center such as exploratory, then the teacher specifies which objectives are to be included. Objectives could range from increasing auditory discrimination to increasing tactile discrimination.

3. Develop activities or experiences for the objectives. Instructional activities can be either teacher-made or commercial. One of the most important goals for the teacher in developing instructional materials is to consider the cultural environment of the bilingual bicultural child. If you have a cooking center, for example, perhaps one of the children's mother can come and teach the class to make tortillas or leche quemada (Mexican candy). The child's self-concept is enhanced by these cultural experiences.

Center activities should include activities for the learning modalities: visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Include listening activities such as listening to records, tapes, stories; include viewing activities such as watching filmstrips; include doing and making activities such as cutting, pasting, gluing, writing, tracing, and last include tactile activities.

Brophy, Good, and Nedlar (1975) suggest that the instructional materials should have the following characteristics: interesting, enjoyable, safe, sturdy, durable, flexible, invite activie manipulating, provide self-correction, and useful. Two other factors should also be considered: culturally appropriate and age appropriate.

At the same time the teacher is gathering, develop-

ing and organizing instructional activities, she should be preparing an inventory of the materials she has collected. Note on the Inventory List whether these materials are expendable or durable and single purpose or multipurpose.

4. Task Cards. In developing a task card, the teacher provides the student with the necessary instructions to carry out the various learning activities (Charles, 1976). The objective is listed at the top of the card along with the activities corresponding to that specific objective. Symbols are included to let the student know where the materials are.

5. Scheduling. Scheduling can range from teacher control to timed to task completion to self-paced. A simple schedule wheel can be deviced which shows which students are working in a particular center at a specific time.

6. Record Keeping. Record keeping can be done through anecdotal records, conferences, daily or weekly logs or student charts. This student chart would have the student's name, the objectives, pre/post tests, learning activities, and completion dates on the items.

Summary

In summary, when developing learning centers for the bilingual bicultural child, the teacher should

consider the basic values of the child's cultural environment in order to effectivley select and develop appropriate instructional activities and experiences.

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